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Juliette Taylor-Batty, review of *Katherine Mansfield and Translation*, edited by Claire Davison, Gerri Kimber and Todd Martin (Edinburgh University Press, 2015) and *Katherine Mansfield and Continental Europe: Connections and Influences*, edited by Janka Kascakova and Gerri Kimber (Palgrave Macmillan, 2015)

Katherine Mansfield and Translation and *Katherine Mansfield and Continental Europe: Connections and Influences* are timely and welcome responses to two relatively recent trends in modernist studies: firstly, a resurgence of critical interest in Mansfield which has culminated in the publication of the important four-volume *Edinburgh Edition of the Collected Works of Katherine Mansfield*, and secondly, a now established 'transnational turn' that has increasingly attended to the significance of translation and to transnational exchange and circulation within modernism.

Mansfield is a writer whose oeuvre exemplifies modernist transnationalism. In a quotation that recurs in both of these volumes, she described herself as a 'little colonial' in London, her New Zealand origins keeping her always detached from the cultural centres and literary circles with which she engaged. Her early wanderlust and later failing health led to a markedly nomadic exilic existence in Europe, and her fascination with and proficiency in languages is reflected in the playful multilingualism of many of her stories. Two recent publications, both reviewed in *Katherine Mansfield and Translation*, have also revealed the full extent and significance of her work as a translator from French, Russian and Polish: Volume 3 of the *Edinburgh Collected Works* includes a valuable collection of all her extant translations, including her collaborations with Koteliansky and with Sobieniowski, while Claire Davison's superb book *Translation as Collaboration: Virginia Woolf, Katherine Mansfield and S.S. Koteliansky*, presents a meticulous and enlightening analysis of Mansfield's co-translations with Koteliansky, and of the demonstrable impact of translation upon her own work.¹

Davison is also the editor of *Katherine Mansfield and Translation*, and her excellent introduction to the volume highlights 'how positively urgent it is that Mansfield scholars take up the challenge of revisiting her life, poetics and after-lives in terms of translation.' (3) This is indeed true: earlier studies of modernist translation, including Yao's pioneering work in the field *Translation and the Languages of Modernism*, make little or no mention of Mansfield. This is partly the product of her invisibility as a translator: Mansfield was not credited at all on some published texts, other translations were unpublished, and until only recently Mansfield was still perceived by critics as merely helping her friend Koteliansky with his English.² Each contributor to this volume makes a welcome response to Davison's call in some way, helping to re-establish the significance of translation to her oeuvre.

¹ *The Poetry and Critical Writings of Katherine Mansfield*, ed. by Gerri Kimber and Angela Smith, The Edinburgh Edition of the Collected Works of Katherine Mansfield (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014). Claire Davison, *Translation as Collaboration: Virginia Woolf, Katherine Mansfield and S.S. Koteliansky* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014).

² See Davison, pp. 7-8, 12-13.

A particular issue that surfaced for me in reading *Katherine Mansfield and Translation*, however, was the range of meanings that are attributed to the word 'translation', and how problematic it can be to stray too far from its conventional meaning. To be fair, Mansfield's writings and translation practices themselves often challenge traditional conceptions of translation: her collaborative translations with limited knowledge of the source languages, for example, or the ways in which her fiction both foregrounds and resists translation in its representations of different cultures and languages. It is not insignificant that the first essay of the collection, by Chris Mourant, presents a fascinating analysis not of translations, but of the parodic pseudotranslations that Mansfield published in *Rhythm* under the pseudonym 'Boris Petrovsky'. As Mourant argues, Mansfield's Petrovsky poems function as a form of parodic masquerade, highlighting 'the appropriative and refractory nature of all writing', and emphasizing a conception of translation as refractory and transformational. This position, he argues, can be felt in Mansfield's other poetic contributions to *Rhythm*, motivated as they are 'by her sense of a radical disjunction between home and exile, or the familiar and foreign'. This is a fine essay, and a carefully researched articulation of the ways that translation impacts upon Mansfield's work in a broader sense.

Katherine Mansfield and Translation contains only three essays that focus primarily on translation in its conventional sense: Mourant's essay is followed by a very practical account by Janka Kascakova, Mansfield's first translator into Slovak, of the challenges, occasional felicities and deliberate strategies of her own translation project, though it sits slightly uncomfortably alongside Mourant's elucidation of Mansfield's subversion of conceptions of translational equivalence. Gerri Kimber's useful and wide-ranging critique of Mansfield's reception and translation in France demonstrates the distortions and mistranslations, even 'bowdlerisations', that contributed to a flattening out of Mansfield's humour and idiolectal range and that, Kimber argues, amounts to a 'sterilization' of Mansfield's work. These studies of translations of Mansfield, with their focus on 'equivalence', the problem of Mansfield's 'untranslatability', and the primary of the source texts, are working to very different theoretical paradigms than studies of translation *in* Mansfield in the broader sense, though Davide Manenti's essay presents a more theoretical exploration of the practice of translation that starts to question the possibility of such 'equivalence': he examines his own practice as a translator (into Italian) in relation to psychoanalytic readings of 'The Life of Ma Parker' and trauma, proposing 'a rethinking of translation as a form of testimony that originates where a direct access to meaning seems to be denied.'

'Liminal' is a word that is frequently used by contributors to describe Mansfield and her work; 'liminality', as Davison points out in her introduction, also marks the condition of translation and translator. Something that emerges very markedly from this collection of essays, however, is a liminality in terms of how the word 'translation' is used: we find the term shifting between a range of evocative metaphorical senses and its conventional meaning. A key feature of Mansfield's writing that a number of other contributors pick up on are the ways in which her fictions could be seen to 'translate' scenes and dialogue into English, and represent the 'translation' of characters across cultures. It is in these essays in particular, that the use of the word 'translation' can become more problematic. Faye Harland's otherwise fascinating account of Mansfield's use of cinematic visual focalisers and of intermedial shifts in stories such as 'An Indiscreet Journey' and 'The Little Governess'

becomes less effective when she draws on translation theory to make her argument for Mansfield's intermedial 'translation' 'of word into image and image into word': in the absence of any reference to source texts or to interlingual processes, 'translation' seems here becomes a shifting metaphor for the representation of sensory experience in words (rather than, as would usually be understood by the term 'intermedial translation', of the translation of a visual text into words). Philip Keel Geheber's excellent essay convincingly presents the significance of Flaubertian impersonality, and *Madame Bovary* in particular, to 'An Indiscreet Journey', arguing that Mansfield 'starts to wed the subjectivities of travel to a transposed Flaubertian style'. Translation is certainly relevant to such processes, but this connection is somewhat undermined by Geheber's reversion to a very generalized notion of all writing as translation in his conclusion that Mansfield 'translates the immediate feelings of experience into fiction'. Two other essays, by Rachael Stanley and Elisabeth Lamy-Vialle focus attention on the bilingualism of the stories set in France, moving to the question of how a narrative can be seen to 'translate' another language and culture in a broader sense: Rachael Stanley examines the ways in which Mansfield uses France and the French language as 'unreal spaces', while satirizing that impulse towards fantasy, and Lamy-Vialle presents a theoretically-informed and subtle exploration of the complex confrontations and distortions that we find between French and English in the continental stories.

Davison rightly argues that Mansfield's 'fascination with the peculiar expressiveness of languages as they cross borders or transgress their own rules form within is an ideal example of what Arno Renken calls "the pleasures of Babel".' Although all of the essays recognize this aspect of Mansfield's writing, the ways that those processes are analysed in some of the essays suggests a lingering bias towards what Yasemin Yildiz has recently called the 'monolingual paradigm'. Under such a paradigm, the idea of a 'mother tongue' inextricably linked to ethnicity, culture and nation becomes the basis of discourses of 'untranslatability', and of negative perceptions of the processes of interlingual mixing, interference and play that occur in multilingual discourse.³ Kaskacova, for example is scathing at one point about the mixing of Czech and Slovak (36), and alongside Kimber focuses on the issue of translation 'loss'; Lamy-Vialle presents interlingual mixing in Mansfield's stories as 'an act of violence' in relation to cannibalism as a theme (and not in relation to Brazilian theories of translation as cultural anthropophagy); Stanley describes Mansfield's code-switching as 'haphazard' and tends to present language mixing in terms of error and limited linguistic competence (arguing, for example, that the narrator of 'An Indiscreet Journey' mixes languages 'much like a novice would whose knowledge of a language only extends so far'). Mansfield's own complex colonial status, her multilingual skill, her gleeful language play and experimental translation practices all suggest, on the contrary, that she should be read as indicative of Yildiz's 'postmonolingual paradigm', in that her work could be seen to challenge to and to transcend the constraints imposed by notions of a normative monolingualism.

While Davison's introduction highlights the significance of Mansfield's own translation work, none of the essays in *Katherine Mansfield and Translation* examine that work in any detail. This is a notable absence and a missed opportunity. It is perhaps the result of bad timing:

³ Yasemin Yildiz, *Beyond the Mother Tongue: The Postmonolingual Condition* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2012).

Translation as Collaboration and Volume 3 of the *Edinburgh Collected Works* both appeared in 2014, only one year before the publication of this volume. It is highly likely, then, given the relatively slow pace of academic publishing, library ordering and the prohibitive pricing of academic texts and editions that these two important additions to the field of Mansfield studies were not accessible to many of the contributors. Had *Katherine Mansfield and Translation* been put together one year later, it may have looked very different. As it stands, however, it could be seen to reflect the very problem that it sets out to counter: the critical neglect, even invisibility, of Mansfield's own work as a translator. Nonetheless, this is a fascinating and thought-provoking collection of essays, which signals some new directions for Mansfield studies and for modernist studies more generally. (It is also worth signaling that the book, as volume 7 of *Katherine Mansfield Studies*, retains the essential structure of the journal, including book reviews, a rich selection of creative pieces, and a critical miscellany, including a newly discovered play by Tennessee Williams representing Mansfield, Murry, D.H. Lawrence and Frieda Lawrence).

It is within Davison's essay in the other volume under review here, *Katherine Mansfield and Continental Europe: Connections and Influences*, that some of the most pressing questions on Mansfield and translation are really addressed. This essay, partly derived from *Translation as Collaboration*, presents a radical re-reading of the act of co-translating. Although Davison does not reference Yildiz, her perspective is confluent with the 'postmonolingual paradigm': she is interested in the 'contact zone between languages' and 'the buzz of connectedness as exchange takes place' in co-translation, in the ways in which limited knowledge of the source language is not so much a deficiency as a strength, in co-translation as a liminal, transformative process that undermines notions of translation 'loss'. Mansfield's translations are read as 'masks' and 'ventriloquism', not only reflecting her own 'sense of foreignness and transitionality', but providing a key part of 'the modernist drive to expand the expressive, formal and thematic potential of English literary writing.'

Where *Katherine Mansfield and Translation* tends to focus more on Mansfield and France/French, *Katherine Mansfield and Continental Europe* covers a broader range of linguistic and cultural European connections: Mansfield's translation and reception in Italy, Hungary and the former Czechoslovakia, and the Polish, Russian and German (as well as French) contexts of her work. The breadth and range of the volume are commendable, and it makes a useful companion piece to *Katherine Mansfield and Translation*, with its exploration of Mansfield's own transnationalism as well as the transformations that her work has undergone in different languages and cultures. This breadth is also to some extent a weakness, however: such conceptual, geographic and linguistic range is also apparent as a disparity in topics and theoretical approaches. The brief introduction presents a useful summary of each of the essays, but a more extensive comparative and theoretical overview would have been beneficial. Although many readers would not be expected to approach a collection like this chronologically, the structure and order of the essays is nevertheless slightly odd: we dive straight into some interesting accounts of Mansfield's reception and translation (Maurizio Ascari on Italy, Nóra Séllei on Hungary, and Janka Kascakova on the former Czechoslovakia) before reading the essays that introduce aspects of Mansfield's own continental connections and transnationalism. One of the most effective overviews of Mansfield's subversive conceptions of 'home' and national identity and her engagement with other cultures and languages, by Patricia Moran, comes right at the end of the

collection. So, when Séllei provides tantalizing details of the misrepresentation of Mansfield in Hungary as a French writer, for example, a reader less familiar with Mansfield would not necessarily perceive the relevance of this in relation to Mansfield's own complex and exilic cultural identity.

Katherine Mansfield and Continental Europe contains some valuable new biographical approaches. Critics have long grappled with the enduring impact of John Middleton Murry's posthumous editorial and biographical manipulation of Mansfield's image, apparent in a tendency towards hagiography and a sanitisation of her life. Gerri Kimber specifically targets some of the ellipses and distortions in Mansfield's biography, presenting a careful and enlightening reconstruction of a particularly obscure episode in Mansfield's life around the time of her stay in Bavaria and relationship with Floryan Sobieniowski, and articulating the significance of Polish art and culture to her work, in particular the artwork of Stanisław Wyspiański. Delia da Sousa Correa's excellent essay focuses on the work of this period, the stories of *In a German Pension*, elucidating the ambivalence of Mansfield's relationship to German culture and language, and arguing that Mansfield's 'Bavarian grotesque' in these stories 'arises out of a conflicted engagement' with Romanticism (111). The biographical focus of the volume is also strengthened by Jennifer Walker's study of the influence on Mansfield of her cousin Elizabeth von Arnim.

A number of essays in sections IV and V of the volume focus on Mansfield's continental stories: C.K. Stead argues eloquently for the value of these stories over the ones set in New Zealand, Angela Smith makes an apt comparison between Mansfield and Jean Rhys, and Erika Baldt presents a convincing analysis of Mansfield's manipulation of national stereotypes in relation to Mulvey's theory of the cinematic gaze. Both Janet Wilson and Katherine Simpson examine different aspects of Mansfield's focus on the liminality of female adolescence: Simpson through a reading of 'Summer Idylle' and 'Carnation', and Wilson through an exploration of themes of vulnerability and transgression in Mansfield's representations of young female travelers. Patricia Moran's contribution is a particularly sensitive reading of Mansfield's ambivalent representation of ideas of 'home' and 'homelessness', and her exposure in her stories of 'the power dynamics and exclusionary practices upon which conventional notions of 'home' are built.'

Reading *Katherine Mansfield and Translation* and *Katherine Mansfield and Continental Europe* alongside each other, it becomes apparent how much confluence there is between the two volumes, not least a number of shared contributors. A tighter conceptual focus for each would have been beneficial: both volumes, for example, contain studies of Mansfield's reception and translation which would have worked well alongside each other; both contain illuminating studies of the continental stories; both examine a range of influences and intertexts. Nonetheless, these volumes contain some valuable contributions, signal important new directions in Mansfield studies, and pave the way for further validation and exploration of Mansfield's multilingual, transnational and translational oeuvre.